

Spring 2015

# Crosscurrents: Spring 2015

Associated Students of the University of Puget Sound

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# CROSSCURRENTS

*VOLUME 56, ISSUE II*

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# CROSSCURRENTS

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*"Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt  
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure..."*



UNTITLED  
RACHEL KALMAN

Every time I sit down to write, I scrawl these words, excerpted from T.S. Eliot's "East Coker," at the top of the page. So, naturally, I typed them out at the top of this document, seeking inspiration in how to write this, my sixth and final editor's note. I suppose I find it encouraging to think that Eliot, who, despite all his flaws, certainly had a unique gift in the use of words, experienced the same struggles that I— and all writers— do.

For virtually all of the artists, writers, and other creators that I know, every attempt to create certainly does feel "wholly new" and yet like "a different kind of failure." In my experience, it's often the best artists who feel the greatest anxiety about their work— they are the ones we have to poke and prod and otherwise harass to submit to Crosscurrents. As the beautiful pieces that fill these pages shows, that work was well worth it.

Serving as a source of encouragement and empowerment for Puget Sound's vast and varied creative community stands as Crosscurrents' primary mission, but it also offers the greatest reward for those of us who have the opportunity to work for the magazine. In my four years of working for Crosscurrents, I have been fortunate to see and read the work of Puget Sound's talented artists, writers, and other creators and have done my best, as an editor, to do that work justice. I am grateful to those artists, for entrusting the magazine and me with their work, and to you, for joining me in enjoying it.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emma Wilson".

Emma Wilson, Editor-in-Chief

## ELISSA WASHUTA

### GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Elissa Washuta, a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, was born in New Jersey and now lives in Seattle. She received an MFA in creative writing from the University of Washington in 2009 and has been the recipient of an Artist Trust GAP Award, a Potlatch Fund Native Arts Grant, a 4Culture Grant, and a Made at Hugo House Fellowship. Her work has appeared in *Salon*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Third Coast*. She is an adviser and lecturer in American Indian Studies at the University of Washington.



## INTERVIEW WITH ELISSA WASHUTA

*CCR: Your work shows an affinity and ability for a variety of literary genres, so, what attracts you to writing memoir?*

I came into nonfiction as a fiction writer. I find that I have a certain kind of imagination: I can translate what I see in the world into strange imagery and figurative language fairly easily, but when it comes to concocting things for characters to do, I come up with nothing. I'm interested in finding truth by combing over the wreck of my memory and creating drama from the tensions that have been worked and

unworked within my own brain. I'm less interested in creating plot points that must hinge upon one another, although I certainly enjoy the products of skillful fiction writers' labors.

*CCR: Tell us about your writing process.*

It's tortuous, kind of. I'm a painfully slow writer because I polish each sentence as I write and work each sentence as hard as I can to make sure it's both taut and supple, and I write with thesaurus.com open so that I can make sure I'm intentional with each word from the outset. The narrator's voice lives in the words, so the story lives in the words.

A lot of my work involves a twisting of found items—magazines, chat logs, old books, and the like. After encountering these treasure troves and feeling the initial tug, I enter large passages into Scrivener, the program I use to manage my projects, and then pull small pieces into a blank space in which I begin to communicate with them.

I revise many times. Inevitably, I have to cut deeper, reveal more, and implicate myself further. I always have to build a bigger draft than my initial offering.

*CCR: Your memoir is entitled *My Body Is a Book of Rules*. What role do "rules" play in your life and in your writing?*

I have troubled relationships with "rules" in so many areas of life and writing—in dealing with other people, as detailed in *My Body Is a Book of Rules*; in dieting, as described in my forthcoming ebook *Starvation Mode*. Perhaps governing my life using various sets of rules is a byproduct of my early Catholic school education.

I find that writers are told to follow too many rules, and I have worked hard to break rules for years: rules concerning traditional memoir structure with a completely cohesive and salient arc (my book is composed of chapters that do not follow chronologically, but I do not consider them separate essays); rules concerning when and how a writer should produce (I don't write every day and often take significant breaks from my practice but still manage to generate to my satisfaction). I believe that people who impose rules upon others do so for

their own comfort because they crave a modicum of control. Writing rules—don't use the passive voice, don't write about dreams, "writers write every day"—can serve to intimidate writers who might dare to assert their own choices.

*CCR: In addition to memoir, you've published a number of essays, many of them about your experience as an indigenous woman. How has this aspect of you identity and others influenced your authorial perspective?*

It's hard to say, because I've never known any identity but this one: I'm a Cowlitz writer, born in New Jersey, descended from Irish and Eastern European immigrants to Pennsylvania's Coal Region as well as my Cowlitz and Cascade ancestors, educated at the University of Maryland, and so on. Some of these elements began shaping me before I was born. My father is a fantastic storyteller, and I was raised on stories of the small town in Pennsylvania where he was raised. I learned early that some people around me did not believe a Native American girl like me could exist: it seemed to be an impossibility that I could be descended from both European peoples and indigenous peoples of North America and could identify with both. The desire to make my reality known continues to inform my writing.

*CCR: What are you working on right now?*

My short, novella-length ebook, *Starvation Mode*, is coming out this spring from Instant Future, an imprint of Future Tense Books. I'm taking a brief break from writing at the moment in order to take care of the book I've brought into the world and the book I'm about to bring into it. I plan to soon resume work on an essay collection.

*CCR: What advice do you have for aspiring writers and artists?*

You are more resilient than you think you are. Cut deeply into yourself and find the most troubling thing you're hiding in there. You'll heal quickly and your writing will only be at its strongest if you gouge out that hurt and bring it to light.

## SCHOOLING

ELISSA WASHUTA

My mom wasn't wild about my new love for *YM Magazine* once I took to the pink razor at the age of twelve. The YM problem was the sex it pushed, or the pre-sex—as far as my mom knew, there could have been full maps for heavy petting of the boy body in there, visual translations of the dictionary words from the book mom got me to warn me about the red devastation that would soon break inside the place I wedged between the cross in my legs. Even in Catholic school, we learned those words, vagina and testicle, attached to drawings of cross-sectioned slices of a rainbow-dye-injected man and woman. YM, which stood for "Young and Modern," suppressed the words my classmates could barely pronounce (my friend Tracey kept smugly quizzing me, "Do you know what a scrollum is?") and focused on the critical details at the forefront of the teen experience, the necessity of running a tongue-tip over the guy's front teeth without shoving a writhing sea snail into the dank shell of his mouth.

I collected the love tips, stashing them in my bunker of a bed for future reference. I was twelve, a numerical chasm from legal but anatomically up and running, brimming with the phantom hormones Sister Agnes warned us to beat down like St. Michael punching Lucifer into hell. The hormones were tempters, we were told, just like we'd been told that television was a tempter toward carnality, and Bill Clinton was a tempter toward abortion. I didn't know what my hormones looked like or where they lived—they weren't like a thumping heart or muscles that could tear and mend, and so I surmised that my hormones were just like my soul: invisible, haunting my innards.

I did what I could to beat back the hormones, but they lashed out and redoubled. I did desire the opposite sex, but I didn't know what I wanted from them—I was stricken with love pains that

drove me to write ten-page poems (with accompanying illustrations) about looking up at the sky and knowing I was under the very same sky as my soulmate. I spent hours standing behind my closed bedroom door, listening to Alanis Morissette whine from the stereo, staring into my full-length mirror, trying to figure out what to do with the mess of me.

YM was most compelling not when it was telling me how to decide whether to go all the way—that, I knew, was only going to happen after the Christ Child took his fist out of my untouched love tunnel and opened it for business, which wouldn't happen after a magazine back-page quiz deemed me worthy, but only after I met that soulmate I'd been pining for and snared him into Holy Matrimony. I could foresee only more eruptions of my rebellious skin, more dances spent rubbing my tailbone against the lunch line railing in the dark even though I knew every move of the Macarena.

Within the pages of YM were girls whose mental paste had turned crumbly, girls rendered here and there as glossy examples of pretty perfection gone awry. They looked normal, but something was moldering under that flat-ironed hair. After reading an article about girls on strange medications for sicknesses in the brain—depression and anxiety so bad they could lead to hospitalization—I removed the pages and kept them, folded, in the bunker, referring back to memorize the names of Xanax and Prozac that someday might help me, too, with my invisible brainsickness cloaked by my green plaid jumper that would render all of us, from first bell to last, just what we were in the eyes of the Lord: identical copies of Himself.

I don't know whether it was the hormones that pickled my brain, but the timing works. In seventh grade, my friend and I were caught with a Hate Book, a notebook packed with vitriol for every member of the class and teacher we didn't like, with brief sections for positivity and neutrality (our only neutral comment being "John looks like Bono"). A nun intercepted the Hate Book and passed it to the Vice Principal, who already hated me for my defense of

my black boots, illegal footwear for their ankle concealment. After my parents paged through the Hate Book in the Principal's office, at home, my dad asked me, in reference to my proclamation that "Kenny is a dickhead" (which I continue to stand by), "Do you know what that word means?" To me, a dickhead meant a waste of a human being who sensed exactly which boy I secretly liked, told me the guy had dedicated a radio slow jam to me or mentioned my name at lunch, then reported back to the rest of the pack about the microexpressions that betrayed me as I willed my face not to cave. A dickhead was someone who condescended to my mother, being overly polite to her, getting a laugh when she remarked on the high quality of his character; later, he would tell me, "Your mom thinks I'm a real nice guy," before asking me what was wrong with my shoes, or my glasses, or my face, or my thick head padded with textbook facts and prayerbook appeals.

"Dickhead" was the world that had been delivered to me from above, perfectly crafted to fit half the boys in the pack who had turned on me after fourth grade, throwing basketballs at my head and declaring me unfit to make out with. Even the boys who knew hurt because they listened to Nirvana fell in line with the leaders and bore silent witness to my verbal floggings. They were all dickheads.

I told my dad that, yes, I knew what a dickhead was, and he drew his shoulders back, then collapsed into a wide-eyed breath expulsion. I didn't know, then, that I had bridged the world of vulgarity and the anatomy lessons of Family Life class.

The Hate Book was the straw that broke the camel's back after my years as a misfit, so my parents agreed that at the end of seventh grade, I would leave Catholic school, ending my time thinking about camels and what Jesus really thinks about their likelihood of fitting through eyes of needles.

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## HOME IS WHERE ELIZABETH HARBAUGH



WHEN CHICKENS GIVE YOU LIMES  
HEATHER DAPPEN

It began in the corner of the ceiling. From afar the peach walls looked all too untouched, a sickly hue branching from the edges in, muddling the color and pictures and frames with a thin veil of dust and grime. The walls sweat sticky in the late summer heat, small pearls of condensation gathering on each new mountain that had formed underneath the paint. The house had become its own entity, growing the varied terrain of the wall, the lighted peaks glowing atop dark mildewed cervices, seeping a mustiness into the in and exhales of the home. It was speckled now, maybe more naturally, dotted like an inverse night sky, infinite and unnoticed all at once.

The blackness began in the corner of the ceiling. It wasn't blackness, except in these small forms, but a veil of brownness, layering and spreading like bits of dark pollen dotting the ripened peach walls. It only existed in the periphery, a shadow, a trick of the light in the softness of August evening sun. The soft cascading ebb and flow of the walls was interrupted by its bulbous form, like a upside-down puddle hanging, dragging slightly down toward the dampened and aged hardwood. It ranged through every color of brown, starting from its edges and working its way in through circling shapes and patterns, like a woman's hair draped across a pillow, un-living but alive all at once.

From the outside it took a trained eye to see the disrepair. Long grass barely licked the picture window beneath the living-room's worn-out scene. The same color of peach paint adorned the outer walls, giving way only slightly to the bruises the house had endured. The birch tree leaned in slightly too far, white papery fingers waving menacingly down at the forgotten roof. By the corner of the house, just out of view from the street, lay a pile of toys—basketballs, supersoakers, scooters—overgrown into a mess of blackberry vines and weeds. The tall, wilted form of a basketball hoop lay by it all, pressing its heavy head into the unkempt ground.

At first, there had been the house. Amid blocks of winding green streets, lined with basketball hoops and square blue minivans. Surrounded by hilled driveways primed for scooters and bikes and roller blades. Between the parking strips and sidewalks stained with scraped knees and concrete-engraved handprints. There were front lawns filled with swinging benches and bird feeders. There was hot pavement and lawn chairs ruined by wet bathing suits. There were super-soakers and the shrunken corpses of used up water balloons.

In June, the asphalt mimicked earth, breathing out the cool scents of mud and grass in the afternoons before the hungover spring rain. The water dried quickly in the heat, contrasting muddy lawns with the hot and unwavering gravel of pavement. Moisture lingered beneath the clouds, a hint of coolness in the heavy summer air, peeking out in the grass stained carpets that peeled at the edges from small feet struggling with mudded shoes.

In July, there were blue stained lips and adventures to the creek or beyond. Melted Butterfingers covered small hands on walks back from 7-11. Slurpie flavors mixed and mingled, indecisive tongues combining flavor upon flavor until sugar became the only decipherable taste. There had been many of them then, selling lemonade at the end of the block or rescuing squirrels from their fates in the wide streets. They had taken over barbecues, leaping recklessly into hammocks and around fire-pits as parents developed a new definition of calm. They had gathered in the carless streets for capture the flag and kick the can, hiding in small bushes and alcoves, small feet caressing every inch of their communal land. Dogs barked in backyards or endured hair pulling and leash tugging for the reward of cold hamburgers and rubs.

When the heat was too much, there were the cool floors and homemade popsicles, unfinished games of Life and Stratego littering the floor as small eyes watched deft hands play. The windows were prism like at their edges, trapping light and releasing it in small rainbows that stretched across the hardwood floors and ceramic counters. Small scuff-marks were highlighted in the lighted path, from untrained feet trying to stomp the glistening colors into the floorboards.

There were five large bodies in shirts or skins, bumping and elbowing and shoving for the orange ball. There were thighs stuck to lawn chairs or rocky curbs. There was him, waiting, watching, hoping to run and jump on tottering legs. There was her, in small Hannah Anderson dresses.

In the late summer there were nights in the street. The pavement sighed in leftover heat, warming tanned and tired legs as they lay under the stars. Some of them had been older, and talked of love and loss, truths and dares beneath the orange street lamps. Small ears and eyes recorded every piece of youthful wisdom—close your eyes when you kiss, leave the window screen unlatched to sneak out, learn that your parents are stupid, disregard their explanations of divorce.

Sometimes beneath the speckled night sky there were awkward kisses shared behind bushes, and punches and shoves over games and pranks. Even less often there were tears or curses, hushed voices discussing mature meanings in the limbo between houses. There was the basketball hoop that hovered above them, haloing their small circle beneath the mosquitoes and streetlight, and clearly stated summer stars.

The leaves were hardening into reds and yellows and browns when the oldest of them left. Sometimes it was for school, walking, tripping over cracks in the sidewalk and the prickly balls disregarded by trees. The five of them walked together, along leaf-feathered walkways and rotten apple lawns, thick Costco jackets guarding from rain and shivering-blue sky alike. There was the walking, skipping, tackling along residential blocks as little left-behind bodies toddled around houses, asking for their Boys? Boys? Boys? in wonder of where they could disappear to for eight hours a day. In the afternoons there were other questions, from the can-I-play-basketball-like-them of little boys to the why-can't-I-take-my-shirt-off-when-its-hot-out-too of sisters. There was the constant questioning of disconnect, of the impenetrable barrier of age.

And sometimes, there were other questions. In later falls there was the when-are-you-going-to-come-visit of moving vans and the good-luck that hung in question form on small, unknowing



tongues. There was the constant autumn transition, leaves turning from piercing green to their muddled yellows and browns, and the youngests growing to be the oldests, the only ones remaining.

There was the lonely steps to school by the always younger feet, and the slow-learning of dribbling and passing and shooting. Rarely were there all of them, sitting in the street, rolling the basketball lazily like the summer flies buzzing around their heads. There was the hint of colder rains, lingering just above the basketball hoops and street lamps. There was the elementary, no middle, no high school reluctance that came with college ruled notebooks and mechanical pencils. There was the transition of bicycles from recreation to need, as cracks in the sidewalk became ignored by pedal and tire alike.

And there was the house. In that moment in autumn, the late-afternoon light would hit the rear wall of the living room. The tan paint would shine in peach and orange hues, stealing the sunset from its rightful home. Every edge and panel and corner would glow in those golden hour minutes. There was a calmness, just under the skin, that came with the cooling of late-summer air. There was the horse-chestnut collection lined across every sill, the red brown polish fading as autumn lost its golden grip.

Sometimes beneath the crystal gray blue of crying skies, there was the agelessness that means growing up. In Decembers there was coming home again, all of them, a new out-of-the-house understanding unspoken between them all. There were the nights between cinnamon-sugar breath and post-holiday bar crawls when there was no longer a difference between them all. There was the inverse empty-nest restlessness, as they crowded memories around the dinner table, talking of some childhood that they must have all shared.

There were seven of them now, their group seeming less infinite with age. There were the youngest ones, still toddling slightly in the drunken stupor of undergraduate life. The rest were older ones, regardless of their age. They would crowd into too-small taxis and drive the short walkable blocks to downtown bars and streets, eyes red with midnight intoxication. There was the loud laughter and

reminiscing and the chokingly sweet mix of adult beverages and nostalgia.

Beneath it all there was still the wonder of young eyes, some silent and subtle initiation into the adult world. They were seven, but two and five, a gap bridged without thought by time gone by. There were still the hardwood floors, glowing red and orange by firelight. There was the mild insistence for ornaments and Christmas cookies that would fade in the coming years. There was the sky that grew dark, illuminating the house in a warm golden glow, the walls somehow reflecting the fire and lights of the houses nearby. There was the moment, between rain, when the street was visible, and it all seemed smaller, the basketball hoop shorter, the small flies all gone for winter.

In the Spring, there were just the two of them. Under the basketball hoop. An unromantic embrace, as white and pink petals swaddled the sky, a temporary cover from rain. There were drops, anyway—settling hot against red-frozen cheeks, blocked by the invisible choking at the base of the throat. There were the two of them, now part of six, frozen in a moment beneath the gray petaled sky.

There was the taking of a life. Death by choice. And all the questions that came with it. There was the fleeting thought that April-really-is-the-cruellest-month, especially among the mud trampled, rain battered Oregon fields. There was the meaningless statement that whoever-thought-spring-meant-life-had-never-been-to-the-Pacific-Northwest.

There was an empty room, that crept into the entire house. There were questions that extended beyond childhood, to parents living their quiet intertwined lives, of youth and age and life and death. There were small boxes filled, and doors closed off, the light paint glowing cold against gray-brown skies. There was that essence of childhood, grown or lost, that pervaded through the scuffed hardwood and cracking basketball hoops. The gray spring light didn't bend or break at the edges of the windows, instead sucking what light existed inside into the mocking clouds above.

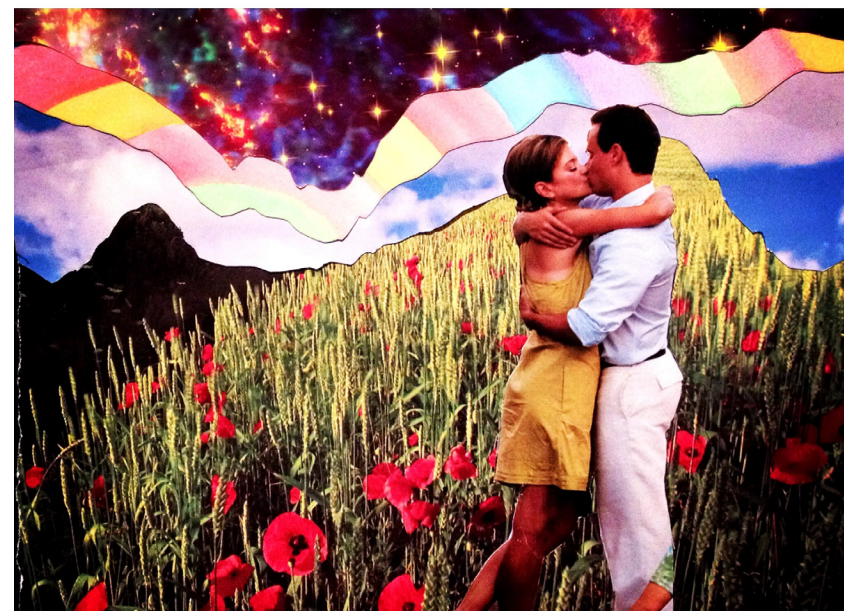
And there was the question of how-much-is-too-much. The

shift in that embrace, when shared history becomes haunting, and talking becomes pain. There was the veiled presence of this moment on the past, that lingering in the periphery. Among super-soakers and dares, and kisses behind bushes, there was the unspoken truth of the death that came in spring.

Now there was just the brown spot, and a set of calloused hands running across the brown-speckled ridges of the walls. Maybe there was a feigned ignorance of the water mark at first—a closed mind determined to examine each room, pulling and pushing and turning on and off. Most rooms had their gadgets, something to twist and prod and put back together again. Here, now, there was just the room, four walls and corners browning at the edges.

At first he stood, or maybe looked, or even touched that growing mark where water had oozed through the plaster. There was the obvious question of how-long or just how. And there were the unasked ones of was-it-before, had-it-always-been, and when. There was an origin story, too tied to the past for comfort, but too invasive to ignore. Somewhere, there was a leak, a hole, a crack, through the once stable plaster that held this home together.

He stood there, in this at-first moment. He waited, watched, searched. His idle hands gripped a toolbox, or maybe a paint scraper or a hammer. There was no longer seven or even six. There was just him. This moment, the once peach walls now seeming a soft-white tan, the brown reflecting off every surface. There was the dimming summer light from the now empty street, the halo of the hoop collapsed and gone. There was the stand-still air, the momentary hush before movement, the unanswered question of where-and-how to begin.



## POPPY KISSES

MIKAELA FOREST

# PHILIA, EROS, PRAGMA

RACHEL SKENE

1. We fall. And like rotting rose-colored leaves,  
like stars spinning, down, out, screaming through space,  
like the hail that broke your car's windshield,  
we are not beautiful.

2. I met you in kindergarten. I liked your father  
so much more than you that year, with his coffee-stained  
fingers and his Dr. Seuss voices. He still remembers  
that I am a six-year-old with a half-shaven head, and he sighs.

3. I used to have three cats. Two of them are dead and buried;  
one after the other in less than a month.  
I haven't cried—I don't know what is wrong  
with me but there is storm in my chest that won't stop rising.

4. You swear you have seen me cry before.  
I lie and say I never cry.  
You wrestle me into a headlock and kiss  
the side of my forehead—there there, you say.

5. Some days I want to lean over  
and kiss you—on your dimples on your eyelids  
on your earlobes with their fading piercings.  
Your eyes are overbright.

6. I want to trace the freckles on your back  
into constellations—you found Orion on my arm  
in seventh grade and I know—I know  
the universe is woven deeper into your skin.

7. We snuck down to the beach and stared  
at the Milky Way that twisted above our heads,  
and when I got cold you said I told you so  
but you shared your blanket with me anyway.

8. I thought the night sky and the endless waves  
and the thousands of grains of sand, I thought  
that would shrink us into insignificance, but right then—  
we mattered.

9. All the stories we read talked about love  
like it falls from the sky and slams, bruised,  
at our feet—but somehow I am still waiting  
for that body to grasp at my ankles and pant my name.

10. Or am I? I pillow my head  
into your shoulder; ice cream melts in our lap;  
the television flickers in the background.  
What do I know? Your bed cradles us; it's a soft landing.



UNTITLED  
MELISSA MOTYER

## URBAN DESERT: AN ODE TO PHOENIX OLIVIA PERRY

Holy moley  
I hate the summers.  
We would always have to get  
slurpies from Circle K, or,  
now that we're older,  
we get 32 oz of dark soda  
from QuikTrip.  
The only goal, everyday,  
is to escape from  
the life-sucking sun.

We wait until night to  
skinny dip or bar hop.  
We blast the A/C  
as we race car down  
the 101 yelling:  
"We be all night!"  
We give boys  
white gummy bear flavored  
smiles saying  
"Kiss my lash."

My parents try to  
make me hide my stomach,  
but have you been outside!?  
By July, the pool is  
boiling from the heat  
and my bikini becomes  
my daily outfit like I'm  
a cartoon.  
After eating ice cream to survive,  
I found out I was lactose intolerant.

Holy moley,  
sitting in the rain  
and having to tie shoe laces  
and wearing jackets  
and walking in wet pants  
and soaked socks,  
I miss those days  
where you could  
bake a cake  
in your backyard.





UNTITLED  
LILY KIELY

## THESE SUMMER DAYS RACHEL SKENE

Aline took a gulp of water. The cold was nice; it gave her something else to think about, something more than the sticky vinyl of her chair and the ticking of the clock. She poked at the ice in her cup with a stubby fingernail and sighed. It was three o'clock.

She hated this diner, she thought. It was so old, old in a new way, all shiny slimy tabletops and checkered floors and just so eighties via the fifties. She and Boyle had come every week when they were kids. It had not changed a bit.

One time, when they were teenagers in frayed jeans, they had sauntered over to the old jukebox in the corner. Three songs for a dollar; they had put in seven dollars and played "Don't Stop Believin'." Twenty-one times. She and Boyle had sat in a booth and spied on the other customers, and every time the song started up again they had cried with laughter.

After the fifteenth time, one of the customers had stomped over to the jukebox and furiously yanked out the power cord.

Aline was pretty sure it had never been plugged back in.

She shifted in her seat. The air conditioning was broken, and the door, propped open, let in only heat and flies. Aline pressed her water glass to her face.

Back when Boyle and Aline were nine, they had wandered down the street in matching red basketball shorts and streaks of black paint, playing Indians. They had used rudimentary slingshots fashioned out of sticks and rubber bands—Aline had said they ought to use leather strips, seeing as Indians didn't have rubber bands, and Boyle had scowled and said of course they did, his granddad was Choctaw and had a drawer full of rubber bands thankyouverymuch, and Aline had allowed that but pointed out that no one would have had rubber bands back then, and Boyle had snapped that she was just sore cause she couldn't hit anything with

a slingshot anyways, and Aline had snarled she could too, and then she had smacked him, and it had taken three of Boyle's cousins to pry them apart.

Afterwards, they had gone up and down the neighborhood shooting twigs at squirrels and tires under the hazy summer sun.

Everything had been much easier when they were children.

Her fingers skittered on the tabletop. Boyle had read a book about Wounded Knee that summer, and had been consumed with fury on behalf of his ancestors. Aline had pointed out that technically speaking they weren't his ancestors and he wasn't Lakota, but had then immediately conceded that either way, it was a horrible horrible crime and something ought to be done about.

It was painless to fight battles when they were children.

She glanced at the clock again. The second hand had not moved from when she had last checked. Aline briefly considered that maybe the clock was broken and then shook her head for being foolish. The clock wasn't broken. Boyle was just late.

She thought about Indians again. Only Indians wasn't correct, it was Native Americans now, as if the words could erase all the ways they had gotten fucked over. When you grew up, you learned how adults make amends. A little band-aid, a few words, a pat on the hand—and then everything is fine.

She tried not to look at the clock again.

Boyle was fine, she knew, he had told her so, wrote to her. I'm fine, he said, stop worrying, I can see your frown from here, if you're not careful your face will freeze like that, he said.

Aline had never been particularly careful. Neither of them had. Maybe that had changed too.

She shifted slightly. Her skin stuck to her chair. She took another gulp of water.

"Hey."

"Oh," she said, the word seizing in her throat. "Hey."

He hovered by the booth. "This seat taken?"

"I'm expecting someone."

"Good-looking?"

"Mmmm. Very rude, though."

Boyle's face cracked, and he threw her a lopsided smile before crashing down onto the seat.

"Christ," he said, poking through the torn vinyl, "This is nasty."

Aline grinned. "Standards have dropped."

He sighed, his breath rolling out of him like the wind. "And this place used to be so classy too."

"Tragic really," Aline said, and blanched slightly.

He looked at her, a slow steady look.

"You want anything to drink?" she said quickly.

"Aline," he said slowly, "You okay?"

"Me?" she said, and then winced. "Yes."

He nodded. "Me too."

They sat in silence. Aline tried to look him over without being obvious. It was impossible. His head was turned towards the window, but his eyes flickered around the diner, over her. Her skin felt rubbed raw.

She took a drink from her water glass, and set it down again.

The air was still around them, filled with the scent of oil and ketchup. Music filtered through a boom box on the countertop, one Johnny Cash song after another. It sounded impossibly loud.

Boyle looked down at the table. He cleared his throat.

"W.H. Auden once said," said Boyle, contemplating the water ring on the table, "that you could only know a person once you knew what their imaginary Eden was."

Aline looked over at him. He looked back at her, meeting her eyes. For a split second, she thought she could see flames in them—the brown streaked with orange.

"An imaginary Eden," Aline said. She twisted her fingers. "As in, garden of?"

"Yeah," Boyle said. "In mine, it'd be like, vast skies. Blue with little puffy clouds. And it's always that right amount of windy, you know."

"What, so the ends of your coat can blow majestically in the wind?"

"Fuck you," he said, without heat. "And, well, you can run for miles. And not see anyone. Just be, you know . . ."

Aline stared at the wall. She could feel her heart beat in her jawbone.

"Free," she said, and flicked her eyes over to glance at Boyle. His gaze was still fixed to the table. Someone had carved AH + MB in the gray formica tabletop.

He shrugged.

She opened her mouth and shut it again. Her hand opened and closed, her knuckles white.

"Boyle?" she said.

"I'm fine," he said automatically. His gaze was far away.

"I didn't ask," she said, her throat constricting.

"Yeah," Boyle lifted one shoulder. "You were not asking very loudly."

"I just—"

"Worry," Boyle said. He smiled, the motion tugging at his burned face. The scar tissue distorted like ripples. "Don't. Anyways, your Eden?"

She bit her lip. "Umm, I guess," she hesitated. "Just happiness. Everything is beautiful and no one gets hurt like... All these stupid games stop."

Boyle stiffened, his eyes turning cold. She wondered what the flames had felt like, as they swarmed over his face. She wondered what it had felt like, the explosion ripping through the air and through his skin and through his heart. She wondered if he had turned to ice to escape the heat.

"Aline," he said. His skin was tight.

"What?" she asked defensively, and then hesitated. "I just—"

"Don't," Boyle said. "Don't. Please."

She wondered how much it had cost him to say that. She wondered if he had said please when they pulled him out of the

wreckage, if he had begged. She wondered if he had asked for her.

She didn't ask.

"I wasn't finished," she said carefully. She thought for a second. "The games would be just, like, children's games. Slingshots. Tire swings in every yard. And the seasons would be like a storybook, you know? Just right."

"Predictable," Boyle smiled. It looked like it took an effort.

"Idyllic," she corrected.

He nodded. "A fairy tale."

"Like yours," Aline said.

Boyle looked at her. She kept her face still, silent, like the old Victorian photographs of Native Americans in varying states of assimilation.

"Like mine."



SELF PORTRAIT  
CHLOE BOULAY

## TO MY MOTHER GRAYSON WILLIAMS-KREBS

i lie about memories  
to fill in the spaces  
i am forgetting  
because i can't admit  
that you were wrong  
saying you'd never leave me,  
because right now  
i'm losing everything about you.  
if only i could use these tears  
as a stairwell

back

to

you

to erase my bitter regret  
of an unsaid i'll miss you  
you're becoming dim and blurry  
even in my deceitful dreams  
i feel like you're going to stop visiting.  
and i think that's almost worse  
than losing you in the first place.





UNITITLED  
SIERRA SCOTT

## ELEGY FOR A DEAD METAPHOR

LIAM TULLY

Woe are the stars  
Because they mean nothing  
Because they've meant something  
To everyone

Woe is the sky  
Because it's meant every thing  
At least once

We have that which is bright against black  
And that expanse of black that turns back to blue  
It's apparent there's  
only one thing that is bright on bright  
So, woe is the sun, too

Woe are your eyes  
They've been compared  
to sky,  
Sun, and stars  
And woe that loves  
Are only rhymed with aboves  
They all died  
telling us who we are



SAN DIEGO SITTING ROOM  
MEG VAN BROCKLIN

## LADY OF THE HOUSE ELAINA FRIEDMAN

Slick white spines  
lined the west wall  
of my grandmother's apartment  
like sharks teeth, smooth  
as pearls preserved  
in glass tubes.

She used to shine  
a pink light bulb  
in each corner,  
flooding  
onto Technicolor faces  
and long black letters.

We weren't allowed  
to touch them—  
our sticky fingers  
would rip the priceless pages.

One summer I wandered  
alone, after dinner  
into the pink room  
and let my hand graze  
the spotless covers.

I closed the door  
and turned the pages  
like ancient vellum  
with the tips of my fingers.

A woman looked straight ahead  
at something I couldn't see,  
holding her hands  
against her chest,  
her long pink dress  
bleeding into the floor.

"Eugenia Niarchos,  
in Dior,  
in the yellow gallery  
of her family home  
in Paris"

I sounded out the letters  
silently,  
silver behind my teeth  
swallowed like a spider  
in my sleep.

When I pulled  
at the edges  
it made no sound.



CARDS AND WHISKEY  
SCHYLER EVANS

## GONE TO INDIA DAVID RAFTREY

A month ago, Alex told his two roommates, Jake and Sam, that he thought India was an interesting place. Two weeks ago he told them he was going to visit over spring break. Today spring break is over. It is a Monday. Alex sends his two roommates an email requesting that they ship all his things to an address in Delhi. When Jake gets the email he reads it five times. It does not take long to read.

i will be staying here indefinitely. Please ship all my things to the address below. There is a stack of boxes under my bed.

-Alex

Just now, Sam comes in through the door to the suite.

"Did you get Alex's email?" Jake asks.

"Pretty weird," Sam says, tossing his backpack onto the table.

"Pretty weird? He just up and left. That's a bit more that pretty weird."

"Okay then, very weird," Sam laughs at his own joke. Jake does not.

That evening they clean out Alex's room. Sure enough, Sam finds the boxes under the bed. He sits on the bed while he folds them into shape and tapes them. There are six in all and they take up most of the bed once they are unfolded.

Jake opens the door of Alex's desk. It is full of receipts and change and old math homework. Jake thumbs through the receipts.

"Maybe he ran out of money and is stuck in India and can't get back," Jake says. "Maybe has some huge debt he needs to escape from."

"You could ask him," Sam says. "Or ask someone who knows him really well."

"I know him better than anybody," Jake says. "He's been my roommate since freshman year. On the list of people who know him, there's his mom, his dad, his sister, and then me. I probably know him at least the fourth best of anyone in the world. At least. He clacks his teeth



when he sleeps. He eats the skins on potatoes. He scratches his scalp behind his ear when he is nervous and all his dandruff gets stuck under his fingernail. When he was ten, his neighbor's dog knocked him down and sat on him and now he hates all furry animals. Except for hamsters."

"Maybe you should call his mom and ask her," Sam says.

Jake starts to pack up the things on Alex's desk. There isn't much on top, just an electric pencil sharpener and a Lego figurine of Alexander the Great riding a horse. Jake wraps the pencil sharpener in newspaper so that it won't bang around in transit and lies it at the bottom of a box. Next he picks up the Lego.

"I didn't know he still had this," Jake says, "I gave it to him a year ago. It was his birthday and I thought he might find it funny."

"I guess you were right," Sam says.

"It was a gag gift," Jake says, "Who hangs onto a gag gift for a year and keeps it on their desk?"

"Why don't you call him up and ask?"

Jake drops the figure into the box and mutters something about no reception in India.

Sam packs up Alex's decorations. There is a picture calendar of America's national parks beside the door and a topographical map of Yosemite above the bed. Other than this the wall are bare and white. Under the fluorescent ceiling light the whiteness is agitating.

While Sam folds up the map Jake opens the dresser. He has to pull hard to slide open the door and when he does the mound of clothes inside pops up like a jack in the box. Three t-shirts that were on top fall to the ground.

"I guess he only kept his room clean on the outside," Jake says. "The bed is made and the floor is swept but on the inside it's a mess."

Jake picks up the t-shirts that fell. The first is from a production of *Hamlet*. Alex was just a freshman but had got the lead. Some people are just that good at acting. Unfair really. The second is from when Jake and Alex's team won the intermural ultimate frisbee championship. The third is solid black. Jake folds the shirts and puts them in a box.

"Don't we have a poster tube somewhere?" Sam asks.

"It's next to the fridge in the common area," Jake says.

Sam goes to get the poster tube.

"Get me a beer while you're out there," Jake says.

In a minute Sam comes back with the poster tube and two beers. He gives one of the beers to Jake and sits down next to him on Alex's bed.

"Here's to Alex," Jake says.

They drink.

"Do you remember the time sophomore year when there was the lunar eclipse and we climbed on the roof to watch?" Jake says.

"Sure. I remember being on the roof, and I remember running from security, but I forgot about the eclipse."

"It was cloudy and we couldn't see anything. You remember how Alex had a lawn chair with him?"

"Sure."

"He brought that chair up the first day of orientation. When I asked him what the lawn chair was for he told me that he wanted it for the eclipse in a year. He had that one night planned out a year in advance. He's not the kind of person to just up and leave. There's got to be a reason, a motive," Jake looked around the room. "Maybe he just snapped. The pressure of school got to him and he went crazy. Overstress. He always worked way too hard."

"Overstressed is too simple" Sam says. "You can't just pack someone up like that."

"I don't hear you coming up with any explanations."

"I don't know him well enough to say."

"Well I do and I say he left from overstress. I've known him for three years. I've lived with him for three years."

"School years are only nine months long."

Jake breaks the tab off his beer can.

"There's got to be some connection we're missing," Jake says. "I'm going to email him."

"Okay."

"I'm going to email him and ask him why he left. And if he ignores me, or gives me some half-assed answer I'm going to go to India and hunt him down. Who just leaves with no explanation? What an asshole."

"Okay. Let's finish packing up tomorrow," Sam says.

Sam gets up and leaves. Jake stays and finishes his beer. He looks at the empty can. It has a picture of Mount Rainer on it. The Indians called the mountain Tahoma. Rainer was a British navy captain who sailed the

East Indies and never set foot in Washington. Alex was named after a Macedonian general who never set foot in America and now Alex was going to India. There isn't really a connection. Jake puts the can down on the desk.

Jake returns to his own room. He opens the bottom drawer of his desk and roots around. Beneath the old essays and crumpled tinfoil sheets with bits of care-package brownie still stuck to them, he finds a Lego figurine of a pirate. It is an old gag gift from a friend, based on a nickname. Not really the kind of thing you put on your desk. He readjusts the arms into a lifelike position and sets it on his bedside table.



NEST  
ADAM SALTZER



# SELECT WORKS

RADIO  
DYLAN HARVEY

A HUSHED INHERITANCE  
LORNA MCGINNIS

NEW YEAR  
PAUL GOUDARZI-FRY

*Selected for their strength as works of art, both in workmanship and insight, the following pieces are explored by Puget Sound faculty to exhibit their depth and recognize their achievement.*



RADIO  
DYLAN HARVEY

## ART REVIEW

### PROFESSOR ELISE RICHMAN

Dylan Harvey's assemblage *Radio* evokes an unbearable lightness of being. The piece's namesake is the only three-dimensional form floating in a flat world, above a crisply defined fake wood laminate countertop and in front of an interior so overexposed its architecture softens into atmosphere. A bar code seemingly brands the countertop, a graphic symbol of the radio's commodity status in the floating world of market flows.

Harvey crushes useful domestic objects such as a toaster, timer, and radio and situates their crumpled forms in airless, blurry, and gleaming realms. He defuses objects of purpose, thereby confounding their utility. More astonishingly, by shattering things that are integral to the dailiness of life, he breaks them of banality. The stuff of daily life hovers, sealed in vacuum packed, thick plastic molds, each object's broken form as creased and rippling as Baroque fabric. Each mass-produced product embodies an act of destruction that renders it immaculately useless, aesthetic and seemingly defiant.

*Radio* and other assemblages from this series explore multifaceted modes of representation. The digital photographs of interiors appear hazy and painterly. Harvey blurs the background spaces, creating a sense of general familiarity without illustrating particular rooms. Contrastingly, the planes in the foreground, images of countertops, an oven, and an ironing board, appear solid and specific. They represent mass produced surfaces rather than more personal spaces, and Harvey clearly depicts each surface's commodifiable materiality.

There is a sense of taxonomy in Harvey's display. The severity and full, frontal presentation of the objects suggest scientific specimens, pinned and ordered. Each molded seal is bolted in place and glistens with the sheen of mass production, thereby exhibiting non-natural histories in dioramas as flat as the global economy and industrial as the alarms that wake us at dawn and radios that babble at night as we fall into sleep.



# A HUSHED INHERITANCE

LORNA MCGINNIS

A little boy with chocolate curls  
Fidgets in a vast, hollow nursery.

Propped in the corner like a doll,  
His feet kick the polished chair.

Outside the ladies take their tea,  
Blue hair nodding as they sip.

The boy slides off his stiff seat,  
Small feet booming on the floor.

He wanders down the empty hall,  
In search of someone to play with.

Later, he grows a scratchy beard  
And hides behind a wine glass.

Yet swings his daughter, smiling  
As her giggles rise into mottled sky.

## POETRY REVIEW

PROFESSOR WILLAIM KUPINSE

Although seemingly simple in its direct language and quotidian images, “A Hushed Inheritance” pursues ambitious questions: How does one weigh the balance between material comfort and emotional need? What is the half-life of a psychological wound? More pragmatically, how can the transmission of neglect and disregard be interrupted?

Like the quatrains of Theodore Roethke’s “My Papa’s Waltz,” the unrhymed couplets of Lorna McGinnis’s poem juxtapose past and present selves, inviting the reader to reflect upon the sometimes uneasy continuity of memory, materiality, and experience upon which personality is formed. “The little boy with chocolate curls” both is and is not the ill-at-ease adult, hiding behind scratchy beard and wine glass.

The other twentieth-century verse that Lorna McGinnis’s poem recalls is Elizabeth Bishop’s “Sestina,” a poem about a lone girl and her grandmother, in which a flurry of repetitions swirls around an absent center: the unspoken fact of the missing parents. A similar absence characterizes “A Hushed Inheritance.” Parenting takes many forms and of course needn’t be provided by biological parents, but the potential parent figures in the poem—the blue-haired ladies taking tea—clearly provide the boy with neither the companionship nor the comfort he seeks. His “[s]mall feet booming” in the subsequent stanza suggests the process by which isolation erupts into rage.

Unlike the two canonical examples I’ve drawn upon, however, Lorna McGinnis’s poem ends with a remarkable transformation that provides an opening for hope, a hope that seems largely foreclosed in its predecessors. Despite the lingering trauma of adolescent loneliness echoing in the “vast, hollow nursery,” in the final lines of “A Hushed Inheritance” the boy-turned-father lifts his laughing daughter skyward, the “mottled” clouds marking the visible trace of childhood’s psychic bruise, but not necessarily signaling a repeated pattern.

# NEW YEAR

## PAUL GOUDARZI-FRY

### December, the Last

I ran away from Mom's house again, so Dad and Dmitri had to take me in for the night. Dad had called Mom's house, even though it was nearly midnight, and when he got off the phone he told me that I was going to be sleeping here and that she apparently didn't want to have to pick me up again.

The morning after, I had gotten up to use the bathroom when I heard whispering from down the hall. My Dad and Dmitri weren't usually up when I was up, because they didn't have to go to work until later, but today apparently they wanted to talk. I wanted to listen. I crept up to their bedroom door in my pajamas, and sat down outside on the carpet. I pulled my legs up to my chest, then pulled my shirt over my legs, then tucked my arms inside to keep warm. The door creaked whenever someone touched it, so I had to lean in carefully without falling over.

"Simon's just – it's not healthy!"

"Pete, it's nobody's fault."

"But he keeps doing it. And there's no goddamn reason."

"That we know of."

"True."

There was a Moment of silence, and I could hear my father shuffling about on the bed as he tried to get comfortable. That was something that he did a lot, especially when we watched movies together or that one time we went camping and had to sleep in the car on the way back from the site. He could never just stay still.

"Yeah, well," Dmitri said, "you haven't asked about it much, have you."

Dad cleared his throat. "Well, I'm not going to intrude. He's impenetrable, for one, and for two, he's silent as a clam."

"That's like the same thing."

"Oh, shove it."

"Make me, tiger."

They both laughed awkwardly.

"But Dmitri," Dad said eventually, "I really think it's got to do with Jude. He moved in last week, and I mean, that can't be a coincidence."

"He was doing it before, though."

I realized that, at this point, they were talking about me, and about running away. I rubbed my fingers together to make my hands warm, and also just to fidget. I didn't want to tell them that there was no reason for me to run away. I think that they wanted some sort of reason like that I hated Mom, or I hated Judas, my stepfather, or that Mom was hitting me or Judas was giving me alcohol. I imagined going down to the guidance counselor at my school and picking up a million packets on how to stay safe at home, how to tell another adult if someone wants to hurt you. Running away from my mother's house was a sport, or more of a game, or a habit that I had taken up some time after Mom and Dad split up, right about when Dad and Dmitri met. I think. The dates were all fuzzy in my mind. If I was eleven now, and they split up when I was eight, and I waited until I was nine before I started. I stopped doing the math. There wasn't a point.

"Look, Pete, I don't want to be gendered about this whole issue, but the fact is that, as far as we know, we're dealing with a little boy, your little boy, who's had to go through a lot in a short period of time," Dmitri said. "You haven't even come out and told him what's happening here. What's happening to us. What IS happening to us?"

I pulled my hands out of my shirt and managed to get myself upright as they exchanged last words. The covers shifted again, and I didn't hear anything after that but breathing as I walked down the hall. I thought about talking to them when they got out of bed, but I didn't want to ruin the mystery. I already knew. They weren't hiding it very hard. Anyone can read my Dad's heart from looking at him. He has what one of my teachers called an "honest face," which is why I knew he was lying when he said that Dmitri was a college friend who would be staying for a while. On that morning, he had been with us for a few months. I lost track.

### Janus, God of Two Faces

Right after my language arts class one day, the fire alarm went off and scared my teacher, Miss Major, making her drop the Expo marker onto the carpet and making a little red stain. It was too windy, and too

cold, and it was the last class of the day before everyone went home, so everybody else was complaining as we started to make a line leading out to the parking lot. Almost all of the parents who had to pick up their own kids were there, and I knew that Dad was going to be here today.

Everyone thought that it was strange to have a fire alarm at the end of the day, because there was no reason to make a drill when so many people were busy. We all stood still together outside, like the penguins we saw in the video in life science class, trying to keep warm. Eventually, a police car and a fire truck came into the parking lot and everybody started to shout and all the parents came out of their cars to see what the matter was. We didn't find out until after, but Moe Ramati had lit a cigarette in the boy's locker room. Some of the kids from the Gardens had brought a pack – I guess one of them took it from his Mom or Dad – and brought it out when they said they had to go to the bathroom. They had given it to Moe, and he had lit it, but he got scared and threw it in the trash where it caught fire. All the police and firemen who went in took care of, probably. We didn't know anything that happened because we were all busy being directed to follow the teachers.

Some parents were trying to take their kids back home. They were probably scared of the police cars around an elementary school, because most people don't like the idea that their kids are in danger, or that something is wrong that they can't control. One mother, I remember, was trying to drag her daughter to the car, but another teacher was yelling at them and the girl was crying and trying to tell her mother what was happening and that she didn't want to get in the car. All three of them were yelling. Some people cheered them. I tried to look for Dad's car in the parking lot.

I saw him. Dmitri was with him. They were talking.

I saw him lean forward and smile. Dmitri kissed him.

I wasn't upset about them, but he hadn't told me. He was acting scared all the time, and I was pretty sure he was scared about telling me. Even if I wanted to do something about it, what could I do? Tell Mom? Tell a teacher? I saw them, and I understood what "bitter" meant, what it felt like. It's that anger when something that you didn't want to happen happens, and you know there's nothing you can do, but it's still worth hating because otherwise you don't feel anything at all.

We brought up the word when we talked about adjectives today in

language arts. Miss Major brought us back into the classroom where everyone's stuff was and the words were still up on the whiteboard. I read them over one more time. Bitter. Fuzzy. Loud. Crazy. Stupid. Angry. Adjectives. I knew what an adjective was and what all kinds of words were, but I was told at the beginning of the year that I couldn't judge a class because of what I already knew, and not everyone learned the same way I did.

Everyone picked up their belongings and we went back out to the parking lot, trying to navigate through the crowd of parents and teachers and the crossing guard who was wrapped up in at least three scarves. They waved their hands around in puffy black gloves, trying to get kids to walk, not run, across the snowy crosswalk. By this time of year, the snow was starting to show the dirt underneath and it stopped being pretty. Dad's car started as I approached it, climbing into the backseat. I didn't say anything.

"Hi!"

"Heyo, sport."

Dad was wearing a black overcoat. His cheeks were bright red. His short, black hair was messed up and sticking out like his stubble. Dmitri had an old army jacket and reflective sunglasses. His beard was the color of fallen pine needles.

I still didn't say anything.

### Februus, God of Purification

Every other week, I go to my mother's house, and she's always worried that I'll run away again. I don't blame her, because I just might. But it's always better to have a reason for it in case one of them asks why I did it. She's not a bad person, I don't think. I just need my space from her, and it's fun to run.

After school, sometime in the middle of the week, we were hit by a late snowstorm that took out the power to some of the downtown area in the next town over. We were safe, though, and Pandora played a mix of piano music from Mom's tablet. It wasn't my favorite music, but I was doing homework and it helped me not get sucked into anything distracting. Tonight, I just sat at the table doing math work while Mom worked around the kitchen, preparing some kind of vegetable soup. The front of her scrubs were stained with tomato juice after it squirted on her

when she cut it earlier. She was tired, more so than usual. But the silence over the music was too much for her not to talk, and I worked slowly because I knew she had something to say.

“Simon?”

“Yeh?”

She let the soup sit and leaned against the counter. I knew that she was looking at me. I knew that she would have come over and sat by me. I knew she knew the consequences if she got in my space too much.

“Judas and I had a little talk the other day.”

“...And?”

She weighed her words carefully. I liked that phrase, weighing words. It was easy to imagine them on a scale, with her stacking them with sweaty hands, waiting for the pie to fall over and collapse on top of her.

“Well, I’m going to be pretty busy this week, because one of the doctors from – oh, you know Helen, she came over for the book club – she’s going to be visiting family down in Florida and I’m going to have to cover some of our overlapping patients.”

“Are you going to be on call this week?”

“Well, yes,” she said, sighing and biting her lower lip. Her hair was starting to go from black to white, or perhaps to silver. I didn’t know how to predict this sort of thing. “But Jude will be able to pick you up from school and he’ll be staying here. I just want to hear from you that you’re okay with that.”

I glanced up from my math. I liked Judas, sort of. He was part of some sort of accounting team at the jeweler’s store, the big one up north in Concord. He always wore a suit to work, and nothing but sweatpants inside the house. He was tall, bald, and had stubble just like Dad, except Jude’s was reddish and looked more like a badly made carpet. I think he liked me, or he tried to like me. I knew that Mom’s nervousness about me was contagious, and I caught both of them giving me weird looks from time to time, like I was some mysterious alien that couldn’t possibly be related to them.

“Why wouldn’t I be? Jude’s fine.”

“I know sometimes, it’s just...you can be – “

“Mom!”

She stopped right when she needed to. I hated that, when she described me as if she understood me. Mom tried so hard, but she just

couldn’t understand me like I understand myself. Nobody did. That’s why I never ran away from Dad’s house: he knew that, and he didn’t bother to make the attempt because he knew how useless it was.

“Well.” She turned back to the stove. “If I’m going to be out overnight, I need you to be comfortable with staying alone with Jude in the house. He’s going to be picking you up after school and taking care of dinner and all that, and I just need to hear you promise that you’re not going to...not going to try anything. Okay? Simon, I know you...please, just tell me that you’re not.”

I felt fine.

“Sure, Mom.”

I didn’t really feel anything.

### Mars, God of War

He stood in the doorway and stared. His hands grasped the top of the frame as he leaned in. I still tasted the alcohol that was on his breath. I could still feel a hand pull the covers back. I felt everything.

“Simon.”

Mom was out of the house again, and we were alone. He wouldn’t have done it otherwise. Too many risks. He knew exactly when he was going to do it. He told me. He told me how he had planned it as soon as he had seen me for the first time. He told me how much I looked like my father and how much he hated it.

I was sitting with my back to the wall. I felt sweat covering me. It was disgusting. I wanted to stand in the shower until I melted away. I wanted to scream. I wanted to put my clothes back on.

He just swayed back and forth, back and forth, wearing nothing but sweatpants, like he always did. I couldn’t look him in the eyes, because his eyes had seen too much and he had used them against me; he saw me and he wanted me, and I didn’t want him back. I didn’t want anyone but Mom and Dad, and even Dmitri, someone that I could trust without embarrassment. But I knew that I couldn’t trust any of them – not because they wouldn’t have believed me, or they wouldn’t have done anything about it. I couldn’t live with the stares. I couldn’t live with them looking at me every day and knowing that I was broken. He had broken me, and if I told them, they would spend the rest of their lives trying to fix me.

"Simon," he said again.

I still didn't look up. His nails scratched the wood in the silence, and I shuddered as I remembered his nails in my skin. He hurt me, and he hurt me without shame.

Really, it was easy. Having trapped myself, having put myself away from my mother and father, having kept my silence, there wasn't anyone to talk to. I had never wanted to talk to anyone about this kind of thing in my life, and he knew I wouldn't now.

He let go and walked down the hall to sleep. It was nearly midnight by the time I slid out of bed and put my feet on the ground.

There was a voice inside my head that begged to be heard.

There was a force in my hands that begged to reach out.

There was a cut in my heart that begged to heal.

And all the while, he was inside of me, working on my hands and legs like puppet strings on a stage with no audience. I put on my clothes. I took my backpack. I ran.

As soon as I got outside, the coldness of spring hit me, the air right on the brink of two seasons. When the clouds opened up, they no longer let snow fall to the earth. Rain came down and struck me on the face. It ran down my cheeks as the sound of the storm covered every noise in my body.

## PROSE REVIEW

PROFESSOR LAURA KRUGHOFF

In his essay, "Against Epiphanies," the novelist and storywriter Charles Baxter argues that American short stories have come to rely on moments of epiphanic insight—often unearned—to create narrative closure. Baxter suggests "loss of innocence, and arrival of knowingness, can become an addiction," and argues "[t]he mass production of insight, in fiction or elsewhere, is a dubious phenomenon."

I start with Baxter's unease with epiphany because I think Paul Goudarzi-Fry counters common expectations about insight, knowingness, and innocence in his short story "New Year." As the reader learns early on, Simon, the eleven-year-old narrator, has a habit of playing runaway, of disappearing from his mother's home and turning up at his father's. Everyone in the story assumes there must be something going on to cause Simon to run away, as readers likely do. There has to be a reason for such behavior. Though his father finds Simon "impenetrable," he speculates the reason has something to do with Jude, Simon's mother's boyfriend. The reader, too, primed for domestic drama and armed with pop psychology about adolescence, blended family dynamics, and the trope of troubled relations between a mother's boyfriend and her son, assumes something similar. Surely, the story will reveal some dark secret about the past or some trauma in the present that will justify Simon's running, and his reticence.

Goudarzi-Fry recognizes this desire for psychological revelation, and he intentionally thwarts it. Simon insists that he runs primarily because "it's fun to run," but even he agrees "it's always better to have a reason for it in case one of them asks." The strength and certainty of the narrative voice in this story turns it, paradoxically, into a story about silence. Simon doesn't speak with his father and Dmitri primarily because they do not speak to him, not even about the nature of their relationship, and Simon shuts down his mother's attempts to speak to him, silencing her with a "Mom!" and taking satisfaction when she "stopped right when she needed to." Through his reticence, Simon exerts a surprising amount of control over his life and circumstances, especially for an adolescent kid bouncing between two homes and negotiating two new quasi-stepfathers.

The power silence offers has its limits, however. When Jude sexually assaults Simon in the final episode of the story, Simon laments, “having put myself away from my mother and father, having kept my silence, there wasn’t anyone to talk to.” Had it occurred in the past, this event could have provided a reason for Simon’s running. It could have initiated a moment of insight for Simon or his parents or the reader, providing just the kind of epiphany about the loss of innocence and the advent of knowingness Baxter shakes his fist at. Because Goudarzi-Fry uses this event to explore not the psychoanalytic reasons for Simon’s reticence but instead the consequences of cultivating power by wielding silence, the event does no such thing. Rather than providing cheap epiphany, the story explores complex and disturbing consequences.





PIECES OF HOME  
MADDIE PECKENPAUGH





## I REMEMBER SAND

NICHOLAS K REANO

## MY HIPSTER FAIRY FISHERY ROOMMATE

DENISE PARRY

After our 3rd 16-hour shift we skipped down the gravel road in  
the 4 am dusk holding still numb hands  
hysterically laughing about a snowman made of bloody fish ice and  
decorated with intestines  
to our room of splintered walls and sand infused beds.  
Drunk on sleep deprivation and the movement of the conveyor belts  
Fiona demanded of the 4 am twilight that our work be easier  
tomorrow  
I told her that tomorrow could always be the hardest  
she told me that I'm Eeyore because my contemplation always looks a  
bit like pessimism.  
A week later I stuck my finger in the pus filled lesion of a salmon  
and worried that I wasn't existing well enough  
I asked Fiona if she thought we were more ourselves dressed in layers  
of sleep deprivation  
She cut 3 tails and stated that we must experience more life when we're  
awake for 18 hours a day.  
this place had forced the clean carefully constructed versions of  
ourselves to collapse  
but she didn't want this coarse damp translation of humanity to be  
what we intrinsically are.  
Water and pink slime slid down my rain gear as I processed her words  
and the fillets sliding by  
60 salmon later she spoke again  
"You said once that every person you meet has some sort of impact on  
your life.  
Maybe you're always you but never the you that you were before this  
moment  
because who we are is infinitely changing  
we won't always be grime."





A ROTHKO W/ A WRENCH  
ABBY MATTSON

## POUNDING NO MORE MAX MIRANDE

Organized chaos, people every which way,  
Like fighting a battle until the break of day.  
I check for a pulse, hoping there might...  
But it's still like the silence that fills the night.  
With force, I begin to pound on her chest,  
Keeping count and forgetting the rest.  
Beads of sweat bleed down my face,  
An internal burn like I'm in a race.  
But I cannot quit, so I continue to thump,  
Unlike the human machine that has given up.  
Beating again and again until they say no more,  
Wishing nothing was unaccounted for.  
As I ponder, emptiness consumes the room,  
The high-pitched beep continues to loom.



MOVEMENT II  
OLIVIA TURNER

BIANCA  
CAM WALTON

Titanium soul  
Burnished unbeknown  
A fluted treasure

Metal gilded with soft petal  
It goes its ways, flows yet stays  
Filling deep chasms of sky



## FISH

TONY CALABRESE-THOMAS

## PARALLEL LINES

CODY CHUN

||

I drew two parallel lines in the sand  
with a stick I found on the shore,  
while the sky in the west  
burned like paper to a flame.

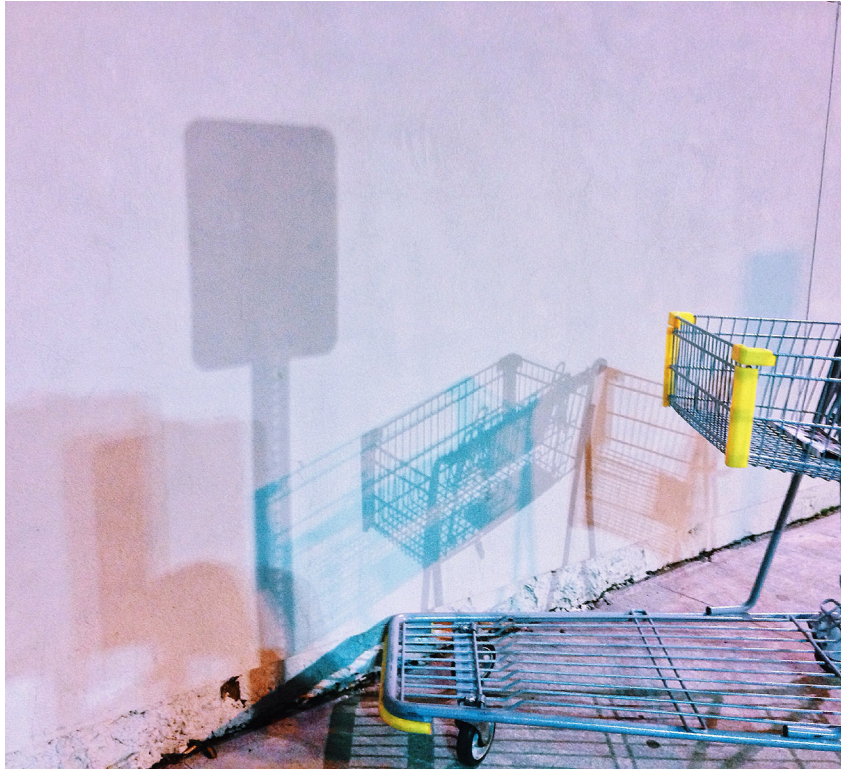
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Parallel lines do not intersect  
except at infinity,  
and then what?

~~~~~

The waves lapped my feet  
and effaced the lines I had made.





## CONVENIENT PARKING

CHRISTIE CHANG

## “THIS IS... NPR”

ALISSA CHARVONIA

Sundays then meant real, California-grown sunshine  
warming a dinosaur of a sports car encased in a shiny  
dollar-bill green exoskeleton, revving past avocado orchards.  
Even when that beast died and left us stranded  
you reminded me it was an “adventure.”  
I don’t know when I became able to differentiate between the voices of  
“Car Talk with Click and Clack” and my father’s laugh,  
because the first inevitably led to the latter. So I suppose I also don’t know  
when I started laughing at “Wait, Wait, Don’t Tell Me” of my own accord,  
or when I started choosing to listen to satire instead of Today’s Top 40, but  
I suppose it happened around the time when the California sunshine became  
a rare refuge between Washington storms, and when my dad’s laughter  
became a fixture associated more with a cellphone  
than with our own driveway.



JACKALOCTOPUS  
ABBY BUCKENBERGER

## A PARADOX CODY CHUN

1. She reads the stories of Borges in front of a mirror,
  2. who believes that “Reality is not always probable, or likely.”
  3. “Likely,” of course.
  4. Root: líkr, Old Norse + alike, English
  5. Nominalization: Likeness.
- 
1. She thinks there’s something unsettling about mirrors.
  2. Something about the way she looks into one and sees herself.
  3. Her self.
  4. My self here and there, she thinks. I am here and there.
  5. I am two selves. My-selves.
  6. She thinks of illusions and paradox.
- 
1. Identity, from identitas, Latin,
  2. meaning sameness or likeness.
  3.  $\forall F (Fx \leftrightarrow Fy) \rightarrow x = y$
  4. If  $x = y$ , is  $x$  then  $y$ ; is  $y$  both  $y$  and  $x$ ?
- 
1. Borges reads her stories in front of a mirror.





BONDS  
MAGGIE LANGFORD

## A PANTOUM ELLEN MUELLER

The trees begin to cry  
Dripping honey colored tears  
And we lie beneath them like fallen angels  
Pressing our ears to the ground

Dripping honey colored tears  
Around us like golden grains of sand  
Pressing our ears to the ground  
Listening for that heavy pulse of time

Around us like golden grains of sand  
Let's you and I walk down beaches in the glimmering rain  
Listening for that heavy pulse of time  
Looking for somewhere to leave our footprints

Let's you and I walk down beaches in the glimmering rain.  
These grains of sand are just fallen stars.  
Looking for somewhere to leave our footprints,  
We have nowhere else to go.

These grains of sand are just fallen stars,  
And we lie beneath them like fallen angels.  
We have nowhere else to go.  
The trees begin to cry.





UNITITLED  
ERIC RALPH

## THE SOUND OF INTERNMENT: YOSHIYE JINGUJI LORRAIN OILL

*The mission of the university is to develop in its students...*

There are a great deal of things that are unclear to me in this moment, but I can tell you with all certainty that today is day I have been waiting for. This is the day I am supposed to graduate into the real world—supposedly full of new opportunities and freedoms. My name—Yoshiye Jinguji—is on the tattered program I hold in my hands. I close my eyes; part of the ritual of the competition I’m having with the empty spaces. I try to fill myself with the chattering of anxious conversations around me while the empty spaces on that program try to swallow my mind whole. Maybe closing my eyes was a bad idea.

I don’t know where I am. Well, of course I know where I am. But what have these places I call home become? As a child, swimming by the Sound, I was always one to ease into the water slowly. So to be flooded—to see my town become flooded—in a matter of days with this emptiness... I never thought home could be a place like this.

*A rich knowledge of self and others*

I am shaking the First Lady’s hand. I’m going to repeat that just to make sure it’s true. I am shaking the First Lady’s hand! Less than an hour ago I was eating breakfast and talking to my classmates like any other day. And now I am looking in the eyes of someone that, for all intents and purposes, lived in my home television. Mrs. Roosevelt shook my hand, looked straight at me and said “Our country is here for you.” Her grip was so sturdy and firm. In the tumult of the last week and a half this statement went a long way to ease unfamiliar and illusive tension I felt building in the air.

Later that night I pick up a shift at my family’s restaurant in Puyallup.

I retell the story over and over again until my little brother groans to have to hear me tell it one more time and my mother chastises me for neglecting the customers. During closing I sit at the empty bar partially reading an assignment for my economics class and partially daydreaming about that handshake. My father comes out of the kitchen with two cups of green tea and sits next to me. We chat about my school work (and of course he hears me tell the story one more time). He tells me about his favorite (and least favorite) customers that came by today. The room is quiet except for our voices and the light clinking of spoons on china.

*An appreciation of commonality and difference;  
the full, open, and civil discussion of ideas*

"Name," the voice asks. "place and date of birth," "first language," "monthly income," "religion," "medical history." I answer the questions calmly although all I really want to do is ask some of my own questions; namely, where is my family? I hear the voice of another senior I share a class with at the table next to me, no doubt detailing his own history for this stranger and wondering when he will be able to return to campus. When the battery of questions is done I finally get to ask. The man in the military uniform checks his clipboard. "Jinguji... You say they are from Puyallup? They are probably at the Assembly Center there" he says. "No, you were assigned to check in at the Pinedale Assembly Center—your address is listed in area code 98416"... "I know this isn't your permanent residence but there is a huge line behind you. I don't have all day to 'investigate' for you." I begin to ask about medical assistance for my mother's diabetes when I am cut off. "Ma'am I didn't do this to you, you people did this to yourselves. Now you're just going to have to move to the next station and wait to be called." It is at this moment I realize that the two soldiers (the two armed soldiers) behind him have stepped forward and are staring at me.

*Aesthetic appreciation, sound judgment,  
and apt expression that will sustain a lifetime of intellectual curiosity*

I look up at the cherry blossoms that are gently floating off in the gust of wind. A petal brushes the white placard below the tree and comes to

rest on my shoe. I know the names on these signs as well as... as well as I know my own. I hear the flutter of a bike whizzing by behind me and I look in the direction of the pathway it follows. It must be close to noon because students have been steadily emerging from the buildings and now crowd this pathway. Chattering fills my head once again, the same way it did all those years ago. I watch the students as they pass. Occasionally one of them looks down to a plaque or up at the blossoms. In the fragments of their conversations I hear about a chemistry test, the concert going on Saturday, a friend coming to visit, apprehensions about an essay that hasn't been started, and a lot about being tired. I watch them pass by for a moment and then bring my attention back to the plaque at my feet. It is a beautiful sentiment, I think to myself, but what is the point? These plaques are silent. These plaques are a piece of the landscape, an ornament placed here every February and stowed away in some closet after the statement has been made. These names mean something to me, but I wonder how many people that walked by in the last five minutes know the stories behind these names. Do these plaques shake the apathy for the lives of the interned or do they build it into these students' lives by teaching them to practice ignoring these names again and again until they disappear in March? I continue around the path, following the cherry blossoms with my gaze as they softly come to rest on the ground.

*Such an education seeks to liberate each person's fullest intellectual and human  
potential to assist in the unfolding of creative and useful lives*

My finger traces the frayed corner of the program and my name is so close that I can hear it being called before it even happens. "Yoshiye Jinguji" the voice demands and I stand and look up.

You're probably wondering why my name is on this program while those of my dearest friends are not. You are also probably wondering why not a single one of us is missing from the internment roster and why the American government would want to know so much about us if all they wanted to do was shut us up. But most of all, I know you're at least a little curious: Did I make it to the graduation?

Actually, I was hoping you might be able to tell me.



**BROKEN**  
KAARI SELVEN

## SOFT UNSEEN SOPHIA RANFT

The cool breeze brushes my cheeks,  
The sun greeted by a pale blue sky  
Like old lovers reunited at last.  
Spring and summer battle beneath my fingertips,  
Running through the swaying grass forest,  
Like children fighting over the red trike.  
Everything is crisp to the touch of my eyes.

I want to stay,  
Plant my roots among the wild flowers,  
Blossom and wither as they do,  
Become a part of their world.

Breathing has become easier,  
Cares pass by as silently as the clouds,  
Everything as it should be-  
I can't stay  
Laughter bounces from branch to branch,  
This moment will pass  
Souls meld into one another  
It never lasts  
Smiles dance upon innocent faces  
Come back to us

I can see every corner of every moment,  
Every crevice of every secret story,  
Although fleeting,  
I am at peace.

Life is never as simple,  
As when I take a step back and watch.



NOSTALGIA  
CHRISTA HOSKINS

## HOMING EMILY SMALDONE

Tacoma  
October-November 2014

An ocean lies gaping, a yawning expanse,  
a wat'ry cathedral whose myriad gables  
rise vaulted above as the sun-salted waves.  
Through this sky without air soar beasts without wings  
on billowing tempests of wind-bestirred sea  
that roar 'neath the beams of this half-lighted nave.  
In all of that ocean, in all of that space,  
comes an auspicious current, a wisp of a breeze  
spiced with the scents that the salmon-fish crave,  
beneath the great hook of a Puget Chinook.  
It's seasoned with river bound tightly by banks,  
the flanks of that streambed that life to him gave.  
Over those banks bent the willow trees, murm'ring,  
to witness that egg as it grew to a smolt  
and one day in wanderlust parted to brave  
the sea. There he feasted, forgot that sweet stream  
'til the prey lost its flavor, the ocean its gleam  
and an ache stirred by scents that his mem'ry had saved  
drew him once more to the bound Puget Sound.  
Past delta brack's bitterness, northward and eastward  
up roaring foam rivers he rages and raves.  
He knows, that Chinook, that home has but one scent  
that saturates thought and awakens what hunger  
lay dormant, now sparking in dim soulful caves.  
Many waters of rivers cannot quench those flames,  
but carry to solace the brave burning traveler  
who dies in the cradle, is born in the grave.





PANIC  
DINA MUSTAKIM

## INSIDE LOOKING OUT OLIVIA PERRY

When you're young, you don't see color. Well, you see color, but it doesn't mean anything to you. When you go to school with children of diverse backgrounds, the fact that your parents don't look alike is normal. You go to preschool everyday and have preschool boyfriends who are brown and white and everything beyond and in between. You wish you had long, straight hair, but only so that you can do more things with it rather than just let your curls stick straight up.

You don't remember anyone not wanting to be friends with you or saying something mean about how you look. You only remember kids getting mad that you took what they wanted or did something to annoy them. You don't really have to have conversations with your parents dealing with race. Your memories are carefree.

But then you move to a new place, a new city, and people don't look like you anymore. The buildings you grew up with are replaced by mountains and your new state is red, rather than blue. The kids immediately notice that you're different and it's not until they make comments about you that you begin to see yourself differently, too. You feel abnormal, taller and darker than everyone; you feel like you're from a different planet. You're not aware of how your view of yourself is changing, but it is.

For Halloween, you're Scary Spice, even though Baby is your favorite. When you hear of a white girl being Scary, you think, But she's not black. People seem confused when you walk around to get candy with the two older white people you call Mom and Grandma. You begin to think that everyone assumes that they belong to your friend, not that they belong to you. This same feeling is brought back later in high school, when someone asks, "Who are those people?" "My grandparents," you reply. "But they're white," the person responds. Your mother scoffs at their ignorance. "Yeah, so am I," your mother is in disbelief. You're not.

As you get older, the burden of everyone's opinion weighs on your heart. The expectations, the stereotypes, the misunderstandings. That one girl who insulted your skin color as a last resort comeback. You begin to push away from what makes you unique. You beg your mother to buy you a straightener, one you saw on TV that can make the curliest of curls uncoil. But your hair is too curly and your patience is too thin. You try for hours until you give up because it just doesn't look right. Your grandmother takes you to get your hair straightened professionally when you visit, but it never lasts with the humidity. All your friends have long hair with sideswept bangs, like all of the celebrities you see on TV. Side bangs equal beauty in your opinion.

You become a shell, a person who follows the crowd and has learned to stop telling boys that you have a crush on them. You watch your small friends twirl around while boys ask them to dance. You stand there with a smile painted on your face when a slow song comes on. You danced with a boy once, but he wouldn't look at you. He kept looking around, letting you know that this was platonic. Your friends would get into dance circles, but their heads went up to your shoulders, so you danced outside of the circle to feel comfortable. When rock songs came on, they would head bang, their long hair flying everywhere, something that yours couldn't do. You cry afterwards to your mom. She tries to console you with stories of her childhood, but it won't matter. "One time, in eighth grade..." She will begin, but you just make a list in your head of what's wrong with you. I'm not small. I'm not cool. I don't have long hair. My boobs came in too early. My legs are thick. I must be ugly. She tries to make you believe that you are beautiful and smart and funny, but just too mature. You struggle to believe any of this, she has to say that, she's your mom.

Throughout high school, your friends have a new boyfriend at least every month and you find yourself alone. They talk about how many guys like them and you can't participate. As high school drags on, you worry that your race is a deterrent. The boys you're surrounded by are white and the girls that they date are also white. But racism doesn't exist, right? Your friends are too self involved to listen or understand or help, so you try to accept the situation.

You try to accept who you are with bold statements and physical change. You struggle to choose one race on the state standardized test, so you begin to organize the closest thing to a strike that an 8th grader can. You cut your hair in to a pseudo afro to be even more different. You are still sad that the boys' attention goes to your friends, but it matters less. You struggle through the time when you were harassed on the street multiple times one summer, having racial slurs thrown at you like stones, but you remember when that motivational speaker told you that you were a walking "product of love." Through all of this, you come out stronger. You begin to realize that people can be ignorant, but they can also be genuine. As many bad people that you've met, you've met twice as many good ones. Your experiences put you on a different plane than your peers and as you make it to college, you become grateful. Not only can you relate with more people than most, but you have been through things that most people haven't. Your diverse background allows you to hold conversations that make others uncomfortable. You can understand both sides of the story even though you only agree with one. You used to silently curse your parents for making you this way, but now, all you can feel is love and gratitude.

When you end your education, you have looked back on your past and thanked it. Thanked it for all of those times you felt left out, judged, disheartened, and ostracized. You make friends who have been through the same trials and tribulations as yourself, and you regret meeting them at this time and not sooner. You can go get coffee with a fellow mixed girl and realize that you're not alone. She too has had issues with peers, understands your relationships with your parents, is outraged by the stereotypical expectations placed upon you both. You connect with adults and strangers because you were forced to grow up in order to make up for what society thought that you lacked. And you learn who is worth your time and who doesn't appreciate you. Your struggles turn into strengths and you realize that your disadvantages have put you ahead. You aren't a jumble of despair but a puzzle of rich ancestry. You are you, and that is the greatest thing you can contribute to this world.





